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U.S. Official Says Research Builds Understanding of Earth's Climate

Bodman delivers remarks at Climate Change Science Workshop

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce Sam Bodman told an international meeting of climate scientists and stakeholders that the United States – through an extensive research effort – is leading the world to a better understanding of the Earth's climate system.

Bodman delivered the opening remarks at the three-day U.S. Climate Change Science Program Planning Workshop being held December 3-5 in Washington, D.C. Nearly 1,300 experts from the United States and more than 30 other countries have joined the workshop to discuss the new U.S. climate change strategic plan, which was issued in draft form on November 11.

The strategic plan, prepared by climate experts from 13 federal agencies, sets priorities for the nation's \$1,800-million annual multi-agency research program on climate change.

"Overall, we have spent more than \$20,000 million since 1990 on climate research – three times as much as any other country," Bodman said. He cited examples of the U.S. research effort, including leading-edge computer modeling studies that probe the influences of clouds, aerosols and air pollution on the climate.

Bodman said the goal of the administration's strategic plan is to map out the strategy by which scientific uncertainties that still surround climate change can be cleared up or better understood. He said one goal in this regard would be to develop and employ the best data that can be used for computer modeling, which can in turn be used to develop products that will inform decision-making on climate change.

He called on those attending the workshop to generate "a lot of good ideas and suggestions for the strategic plan." A final version of the plan is scheduled to be released in April 2003.

The entire strategic plan can be found at the following Web site:
<http://www.climatescience.gov/Library/stratplan2003/toc.htm>

Following is the text of Bodman's remarks:

Deputy Secretary of Commerce Sam Bodman
Climate Change Science Program Workshop
December 3, 2002

[As prepared for delivery]

Welcome and thank you very much for your participation. It is my pleasure to welcome you on behalf of Commerce Secretary Don Evans and the entire Administration. Thirteen Federal agencies are collaborating in this research effort. That in itself says

something about the commitment of this Administration to addressing the issue of global climate change. And I am very encouraged by the impressive turnout for this important workshop.

Throughout government we are working hard to implement President Bush's results-focused vision for environmental protection . . . and to meet the challenges and goals that he has set forth in this area. Federal agencies are working together under the leadership of a cabinet-level committee on climate change, headed by Secretary Evans and Secretary of Energy Abraham, to set priorities for additional investments in climate change research.

The U.S. is leading the world to a better understanding of our climate system. Overall, we have spent more than \$20 billion since 1990 on climate research . . . three times as much as any other country . . . But it is our researchers - our dedicated scientists and engineers - who are our finest assets. They are creating results:

- For example, we have developed - and we operate - the world's leading array of earth science satellite systems, under the direction of NASA, NOAA and several other federal agencies . . .
- We are leading the international investment in exploration of the surface and deep ocean influences on climate . . .
- And the Federal government sponsors leading-edge studies and computer modeling analyses that probe the influences of clouds, aerosols, and air pollution on our climate.

This country has a strong commitment to, and history of, sound science and research . . . and the President has asked us to push ahead at an accelerated pace . . . to take a comprehensive look at our climate change research programs and discuss how to move these activities forward so that the results can best be used to inform public policymaking and improve natural resource management.

President Bush announced his comprehensive global climate change initiative at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's main facility (Silver Spring) in February . . . he was the first President to visit this facility and had the opportunity to see first-hand the results of some of our climate and weather research programs.

His initiative calls for increasing climate funding . . . reducing greenhouse gas intensity by 18% in the next decade, while sustaining economic growth needed to finance investment in innovative clean energy technologies . . . challenging industry to reduce emissions . . . mandating high research standards . . . and expanding international cooperation to complement our domestic programs, including investments in climate observation systems in developing countries.

The President has said repeatedly that we must harness the power of science and breakthrough technologies. We must build a focused science program to improve the information available to policy makers . . . the goal here is to develop and employ the best data that can be used for modeling, which can in turn be used to develop products that will inform our decision-making.

And we cannot do any of that successfully and efficiently without constructive input from all involved and concerned parties . . . this is truly a cooperative effort.

We need to hear from all contributing Federal agencies, from industry and environmental groups, and from the international research community . . . as well as from governments around the world, states and local communities . . . in other words,

ideas for managing and protecting our precious environmental resources cannot be limited to Washington.

This workshop responds directly to the President's directive that we develop a well-reasoned approach to global climate change issues . . . one that is objective, sensitive to uncertainties, and well documented for public debate.

For example, your sessions will address specific questions outlined in a report by the National Academy of Sciences last year regarding the scientific uncertainty surrounding climate change. We hope that this workshop - and the Strategic Plan that you will be discussing - will map out the strategy by which these uncertainties can be cleared up or better understood.

This meeting is designed to be open, transparent, and inclusive . . . encouraging input from a broad and diverse group of stakeholders with differing views. The point here is to get your feedback on the optimal climate science research program . . . so be rigorous, constructive, and forward-looking . . . I know you will be.

Thank you in advance for your comments, involvement, and expertise. I know this will be a productive conference . . . generating a lot of good ideas and suggestions for the Strategic Plan . . . and I look forward to a full report from Assistant Secretary Mahoney and others.

Theodore Roosevelt, our 26th President and a dedicated conservationist, said: "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired in value." And that is really why all of us are here today. The science that you do, your research, allows us to clean our air, improve our health, and leave our planet a better place for our children and their children.

Thank you.

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